IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Currently amended) A water-based ink composition, comprising:

a polybasic acid selected from the group consisting of ~~malonic acid~~, polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid, and glycerol dicarboxylic acid,

a water-insoluble cationic polymer,

a coloring agent, and

a monovalent acid having a water-solubility of not less than 10% by weight at 20°C,

wherein the composition contains dispersed therein water-insoluble particles comprising the water-insoluble cationic polymer and the coloring agent.

Claim 8 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the water-insoluble cationic polymer is a vinyl polymer prepared by copolymerizing a monomer mixture comprising (a) a monomer having a salt-forming group, (b) a macromer, and (c) a monomer copolymerizable with the monomer having a salt-forming group and the macromer.

Claim 9 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7 or 8, further comprising at least one of an ionic polymer which is solubilized in the composition and an ionic polymer which is emulsified in the composition.

Claim10: (Canceled).

Claim 11 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the polybasic acid is polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 12 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the polybasic acid is glycerol dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 13 (Previously Submitted): The water based ink composition according to claim 7, which contains 0.01 to 20% by weight of the water-soluble cationic polymer.

Claim 14 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, which has a pH of 3 to 7.

Claim 15 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the coloring agent is a pigment.

Claim 16 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the coloring agent is a dye.

Claim 17 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the composition contains 0.5 to 20% by weight of the coloring agent.

Claim 18 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 7, wherein the diameter of the water-insoluble particles is 0.01 to 0.5 μm.

Claim 19 (Currently amended): A water-based ink composition, comprising:

a polybasic acid selected from the group consisting of malonic acid, a polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid, and glycerol dicarboxylic acid,

0.01 to 20% by weight of a water-insoluble ionic polymer, and

a pigment,

wherein the composition contains dispersed therein water-insoluble particles comprising the water-insoluble ionic polymer and the pigment.

Claim 20 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the water-insoluble ionic polymer is a vinyl polymer prepared by copolymerizing a monomer mixture comprising (a) a monomer having a salt-forming group, (b) a macromer, and (c) a monomer copolymerizable with the monomer having a salt-forming group and the macromer.

Claim 21 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19 or 20, further comprising at least one of an ionic polymer which is solubilized in the composition and an ionic polymer which is emulsified in the composition.

Claim 22 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the polybasic acid is malonic acid.

Claim 23 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the polybasic acid is polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 24 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the polybasic acid is glycerol dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 25 (Canceled).

Claim 26 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, which has a pH of 3 to 7.

Claim 27 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, which has a pH of 6 to 12.

Claim 28 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the composition contains 0.5 to 20% by weight of the pigment.

Claim 29 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 19, wherein the diameter of the water-insoluble particles is 0.01 to 0.5 μm.

Claim 30 (Previously submitted): A water-based ink composition, comprising:

a polybasic acid selected from the group consisting of a polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid and glycerol dicarboxylic acid,

a water-insoluble ionic polymer, and

a coloring agent.

Claim 31 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the ionic polymer is a cationic polymer, and the water-based ink composition further comprises a monovalent acid having a water-solubility of not less than 10% by weight at 20°C.

Claim 32 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the coloring agent is a pigment.

Claim 33 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, which contains dispersed therein water-insoluble particles comprising the water-insoluble ionic polymer and the coloring agent.

Claim 34 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 33, wherein the ionic polymer is a vinyl polymer prepared by copolymerizing a monomer mixture comprising (a) a monomer having a salt-forming group, (b) a macromer, and (c) a monomer copolymerizable with the monomer having a salt-forming group and the macromer.

Claim 35 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 33 or 34, further comprising at least one of an ionic polymer which is solubilized in the composition and an ionic polymer which is emulsified in the composition.

Claim 36 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the polybasic acid is polyethylene oxide dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 37 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the polybasic acid is glycerol dicarboxylic acid.

Claim 38 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, which contains 0.01 to 20% by weight of the ionic polymer.

Claim 39 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, which has a pH of 3 to 7.

Claim 40 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, which has a pH of 6 to 12.

Claim 41 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the composition contains 0.5 to 20% by weight of the coloring agent.

Claim 42 (Previously submitted): The water-based ink composition according to claim 30, wherein the diameter of the water-insoluble particles is 0.01 to 0.5 μm.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claim 7 has been amended to limit it to the allowable embodiments of Claims 11 and 12.

Claim 19 has been amended by incorporating therein the limitation of Claim 25, Claim 25 thus having been canceled.